

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9655

USIA WASHDC

UNCLAS SINGAPORE 4459

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, BLIB

SUBJECT: ELECTRONIC DIALOGUE AS COMMERCIAL PROGRAM TOOL

REF: STATE 222495

1. USIS SINGAPORE CONDUCTED ELECTRONIC DIALOGUE IN MARCH THIS YEAR AS CLIMAX TO WEEK LONG THEMATIC PROGRAM ON NEW URBAN TECHNOLOGIES. THE DIALOGUE, HOSTED BY AMBASSADOR, PUT KEY GOS TRANSPORTATION DECISION MAKERS IN TOUCH WITH CARROLL CARTER OF DOT TO DISCUSS MASS RAPID TRANSIT. THE DIALOGUE WAS PRECEDED BY A VIDEOTAPE INTERVIEW WITH CARTER RECORDED EARLIER IN WASHINGTON AND BASED IN PART ON QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY EMBASSY. INTERVIEW WAS CONDUCTED BY USIA SCIENCE ADVISER FAMILIAR WITH SINGAPORE. CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS THEN HAD OPPORTUNITY TO DELVE INTO SPECIFIC POINTS MORE DEEPLY, IMPACT OF PROGRAM, BOTH COMMERCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL, EXCELLENT.

2. THIS EXPERIENCE CONVINCED US ELECTRONIC DIALOGUE COUPLED WITH VTR HAS GREAT POTENTIAL IN COMMERCIAL AREA. IT CAN BE VERY EFFECTIVEMETHOD OF COMMUNICATING U.S. TECHNOLOGICAL SUPERIORITY IN A PARTICULAR FIELD WHEN SPECIFIC APPROACHES TO PROBLEMS CAN BE DEMONSTRATED TO PERSONS MAKING PERTINENT DEVELOPMENT DECISIONS. EXAMPLES RELEVANT TO SINGAPORE ARE MRT, NUCLEAR GENERATION OF POWER AND OTHER ENERGY ALTERNATIVES, UNCLASSIFIED

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AND SYSTEMS APPROACHES TO DEVELOPMENT PROBLEMS,

BUILDING, HOSPITAL PLANNING, ETC.

3. AS POINTED OUT IN REFTEL, ELECTRONIC DIALOGUE, WHILE EFFECTIVE, IS EXPENSIVE AND TIME CONSUMING AND MUST BE USED SPARINGLY. VTR, HOWEVER, IS NOT, AND, IF APPLIED PROPERLY, CAN HAVE EVEN GREATER COMMERCIAL IMPACT THAN ELECTRONIC DIALOGUE. POST PARTICULARLY INTERESTED USE VTR IN RESOURCE CENTER COMMERCIAL SERVICES UNIT (SUCCESSOR TO EMBASSY COMMERCIAL LIBRARY). SPECIFIC PROPOSALS TO FOLLOW.

4. POST ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE POSSIBLE ONLY BECAUSE OF CLOSE WORKING TIES BETWEEN EMBASSY COMMERCIAL AND USIS OFFICERS AND STAFF. SINCE IT IS AXIOMATIC THAT SIMILAR CLOSE COOPERATION EXIST IN WASHINGTON IF SUCH INNOVATIVE MEDIA APPROACHES TO COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES ARE TO WORK, EFFORTS INDICATED REFTEL ENTHUSIASTICALLY RECEIVED HERE. WE WISH ALSO REITERATE THAT, IN SOPHISTICATED ENVIRONMENT SUCH AS SINGAPORE, ONLY MEDIA PRODUCTS AND PROGRAMS OF PROFESSIONAL QUALITY SHOULD BE ATTEMPTED.
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